Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAIRO 08973 111427Z

44
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
---------- 060087
R 111330Z SEP 75
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6380
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 8973

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR IS EG
SUBJECT: ALLEGED ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES NEAR ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY IN SINAI

1. ON FAHMY'S INSTRUCTIONS, HIS CHEF DE CABINET USAMA AL-BAZ TODAY READ ME A REPORT FROM UNIDENTIFIED EGYPIAN SOURCE IN SINAI ALLEGING THAT A STATE OF "DISCONTENT AND UNREST" CURRENTLY EXISTS AMONG THE MONKS OF ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY BECAUSE OF PROBLEMS THEY ARE ENCOUNTERING WITH THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION AUTHORITIES. THE LATTER ARE REPORTEDLY SEEKING TO ESTABLISH A SMALL SETTLEMENT -- INCLUDING A SCHOOL, SEVERAL HOUSES, A GASOLINE STATION AND A PARKING LOT -- SOME THREE METERS AWAY FROM A PIECE OF LAND USED BY THE ST. CATHERINE'S MONKS. ADDITIONALLY, THE EGYPTIAN REPORT INDICATES THAT THE ISRAELIS WANT TO ESTABLISH A CASINO FOR VISITING TOURISTS INSIDE OF ST. CATHERINE'S MONASTERY WITHOUT OBTAINING THE CONSENT OF THE MONKS. FINALLY, THE ISRAELIS ARE SAID TO BE ESTABLISHING A MILITARY CAMP ADJACENT TO ST. CATHERINE'S AND THE MONKS ARE FEARFUL OF THE MILITARY DRILLS AND PRACTICES THAT MAY TAKE PLACE THERE.

2. AL-BAZ WAS A BIT ABASHED IN GIVING ME THE REPORT. FAHMY'S PURPOSE IN WANTING IT GIVEN TO US, HE EXPLAINED, WAS TO CITE ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF ILLEGAL ISRAELI SETTLE-MENT BEING ESTABLISHED IN THE SINAI WHICH, HE IS CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 08973 111427Z

CONVINCED, THE ISRAELIS WILL AT SOME FUTURE TIME TRY TO

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

USE AS A FAIT ACCOMPLI. FAHMY HAD POINTEDLY NOTED
THAT WE HAD CLAIMED LAST YEAR TO BE UNINFORMED OF THE
LOCATION OF THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON GOLAN AND
SAID HE DID NOT WANT THIS TO HAPPEN IN THE CASE OF SINAI.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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